

Social Planning Council of Ottawa

Poverty Profile of the City of Ottawa

Based on the 2006 Census

June 2010

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Summary

A Snapshot of Poverty in Ottawa

15.2% of the population lived in poverty in Ottawa in 2005 (121,209 individuals), a slight increase from 15% in 2000 (116,884 people), despite a 9.8% increase in median individual income between 2000 and 2005. More people moved into the higher income brackets but there was little improvement for those with low incomes.

The “depth” of poverty (i.e. how far below the LICO people live) has also worsened since 2000. On average individuals and families in Ottawa were living \$7,800 below the LICO in 2005. 45% of low income unattached individuals (people not living in a family) and 31% of low income families lived on incomes at least 50% below LICO in 2005.

This report uses the “Low Income Cut-Off” (LICO) as it is calculated by Statistics Canada and is widely recognized as the most commonly used indicator of low income. While there are several measures of poverty, the reality is that all individuals and families on social assistance and a significant proportion of the working poor live below all the poverty measures. The main issue remains how to ensure people have enough to support themselves and their families.

Why is There Poverty in Ottawa?

Four factors are leading to poverty in Ottawa and elsewhere in Canada:

- a) **Significant changes in the labour market**, with the result that having a job is not a guarantee of rising out of poverty. The poverty rate before tax of those who were employed was 10.1%.

Growth in part time work. The growth of part time work is an increasing challenge. 22.5% of persons 15 years and over in the labour force worked part-time in 2005. Part time and temporary work has significant impact on employment income. Some choose to work part time, but others cannot find full time work.

Full time / full year work does not guarantee an adequate income. 5% of workers with a full-time / full-year job in 2005 still lived in poverty before taxes (13,510). The phenomenon of “working poor” is primarily a result of low wages in jobs held by workers in their prime working years. 75% of working poor individuals in Ottawa were aged 25 – 54. 9% of families with children were working poor families in 2005.

Self-employment is a risky alternative for people unable to get good jobs. 40% of Ottawa’s 50,545 self-employed had incomes below \$20,000 (19,570) in 2005.

- b) **A housing market which cannot meet the needs of low income households**

There is a profound shortage of quality and affordable housing. 42% of renter households and 15% of owner households spent 30% or more of their income on rent or mortgage payments in 2006

c) Policies, social programs and income support programs have not adequately reduced poverty

The social 'safety net' has reduced benefits, restricted eligibility criteria and a web of contradictory policies have trapped vulnerable individuals with no alternatives but poverty. As a result, the system itself is contributing to a process of exclusion, stigmatization and perpetuated poverty. Of urgent concern are:

- The low benefit levels for ODSP and OW.
- The recent (2010) cut to the Ontario Special Diet Allowance.
- The fact that most people out of work in Ontario do not qualify for employment benefits.

In addition, government policies to support families have not kept pace with the changes in the labour market, the housing market and with demographic trends such as the impact of the aging population on care-giving.

d) Additional factors which affect equity seeking groups.

Aboriginal residents, immigrants, recent immigrants, visible minority residents and people with disabilities face barriers which others do not encounter and which contribute to higher rates of poverty, unemployment and lower median incomes. Some of the factors which affect these groups at risk of economic exclusion include:

- Lack of accommodations in the labour market for people with disabilities
- Discrimination
- The history of colonization of Aboriginal residents and the legacy of residential schools
- Policies and practices particular to immigrants, such as delays in the naturalization process and poor recognition of foreign acquired credentials.

Who is Poor?

Certain population groups have higher rates of poverty because they are more affected by the four factors which lead to poverty. We need to look at who is poor from three perspectives:

a) The family or household arrangement

Unattached individuals have a very high rate and depth of poverty. 34.1% of unattached individuals, i.e. people not in families, live on low income in Ottawa (41,455 individuals), compared to 15.2% for all individuals and 11.1% for families. 45% of unattached individuals (18,645) had incomes below 50% of LICO before taxes in 2005. Unattached individuals are a very significant portion of Ottawa's poor,

making up just over one third of all low income people in Ottawa. The poverty of unattached individuals is an extremely concerning trend. Unattached individuals have not benefited as much from overall income gains brought on by higher employment incomes nor from policy changes to address poverty.

Families likely to have one income are at higher risk. 40% of lone parent families with children under 18 lived in poverty before taxes in 2005 compared to 11.1% of all economic families. 35% of all low income families in Ottawa are female led lone parent families. This is disproportionate to their share of families.

The presence of children results in a higher risk of family poverty. The size of the family, particularly the number of children present, is a factor in the risk of poverty. 60% of families living in poverty in Ottawa in 2006 had children. With just 3 or more children in a family, the incidence of low income rises to 12.8% for couple families or 48% for lone parent families, compared to 11.1% for all families. Furthermore, families with younger children have a higher rate of poverty on average than families with older children. The significant rates of family poverty – particularly for those with one income and those with children – point to a pressing need for improved policies and programs to concretely assist families – including affordable, quality childcare and supportive school fee policies.

b) The stage of life

Child and youth poverty remains persistently high. 31% of all people living in poverty in Ottawa in 2005 were children in families. 32,853 children and youth aged 18 or less lived on low income in Ottawa in 2005 (18.7%).

Youth 18 to 24 have a very high rate of poverty (26%), reflecting difficulties for new entrants to the labour market, the high cost of housing, the fact that many are unattached individuals, and the economic burdens experienced by young families. 70.2% of 15 – 24 year olds not living with their family lived in poverty in 2005 (i.e. living alone or with others not related to them). Overall, public policy has not effectively responded to the impact of housing and labour market conditions on young people.

Seniors living alone remained at high risk of poverty despite improvements in seniors poverty overall. 67% of all seniors living in poverty were living alone. The poverty rate for seniors living alone was 28% compared to 11% for all seniors.

Women have higher rates of poverty related to care-giving. Overall the rate of poverty for women (15.9%) was comparable to that of men (14.5%). However, women in the caregiving years had a greater degree of economic exclusion compared to men, including higher rates of unemployment, over-representation in part time work, lower median incomes and higher rates of poverty among female led lone parent families. In addition, senior women have higher rates of poverty than senior men. Balancing care-giving with work over the lifespan translates to lower

retirement incomes for senior women compared to men. In addition, more senior women live alone than senior men, which increases their risk of poverty.

c) The circumstances of particular groups, also called equity seeking groups

15.2% of Ottawa's general population lived in poverty before tax in 2005 compared to:

- 25.3 % of Aboriginal identity residents
- 22.7% of immigrants
- 43.4% of recent immigrants (arrived 2001 to 2006)
- 30.5 % of visible minority residents (49,265 individuals)
- 21% of people with disabilities.
- 16% of Francophones (24,030 individuals)

These groups experience more economic exclusion because of particular factors which affect only their situation (e.g. inadequate accessibility in employment, or discrimination) compounded with the issues identified above (e.g. more likely to live alone or higher percentage of families with young children).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The recommendations in this report are focused at the local level although all levels of government have a crucial role to play in poverty reduction.

1. Ensure the City's commitment to a multi-year, multi-phase Poverty Reduction Strategy, building on Phase 1.
2. Re-invest the savings from the upload of social assistance benefits into affordable housing.
3. The City develop a community economic development strategy designed to increase the number of good jobs for people facing barriers in the labour market and poverty.
4. The City establish a taskforce to put in place additional programs / initiatives to increase access to nutritious food for low income residents in the City.
5. As part of Phase 2 of the Ottawa Poverty Reduction Strategy, investigate the options for implementing a reduced fare bus pass for low income individuals
6. All school boards in Ottawa review their existing guidelines, policies and procedures with respect to all fees charged to students in the regular day school program (such as course fees, purchase of materials, etc.).
7. Increase the supports for immigrant children in the school system particularly Multicultural Liaison Workers and supports for English as a Second Language and French as a Second Language.

Introduction

This report presents a portrait of poverty in the City of Ottawa as reflected in the 2006 census. It is divided into four sections:

- A snapshot of poverty in Ottawa, highlighting the number of people in poverty and some concepts to help understand what poverty in Ottawa means;
- An overview of the factors that lead to poverty in Ottawa;
- An exploration of who is poor in Ottawa, particularly highlighting groups which are at higher risk of poverty;
- Conclusions and recommendations, examining the impact of poverty on individuals and the City and proposing recommendations to reduce poverty and mitigate the impact of poverty on individuals and families.

The primary data of this report is based on the Community Social Data Strategy¹, Urban Poverty Project 2006 (2006 Census). A small amount of data is from the Statistics Canada website. The analysis of the Francophone population and people with disabilities is based on custom data purchases of the 2006 Census from Statistics Canada. Please note that income and therefore poverty data provided in the 2006 census is based on incomes in the full-year prior to the census survey (i.e. 2005 in the case of the 2006 census).

In most cases we use the median income instead of the average income for the analysis of incomes. Median income is a better indicator to understand many income trends as the average income is very sensitive to extremes at the high or low end of the income spectrum. For the incidence of poverty, we use the concept of Low Income Cut-Off (LICO). LICO remains the most commonly used indicator of poverty by researchers and allows for comparability with the majority of previous studies and reports, including those by the SPCO. As well, most data on low income from Statistics Canada uses the LICO rather than the other measures. We identify people living below the LICO as persons living in poverty, and therefore, the percentage of those living below LICO is the “poverty rate”.

Most of the report is based on a standard Statistics Canada boundary, called the census sub-division. This corresponds to the boundaries of the City of Ottawa. In a few clearly defined cases, we provided information on the boundary of the census metropolitan area (CMA), identified by Statistics Canada, as “Ottawa-Gatineau Census Metropolitan Area (Ontario Part). This is an area slightly larger than the City of Ottawa proper, and includes a few areas within Russell Township on the east. We use CMA data only where comparable data was not available to us at the census sub-division level.

This report is complemented by two other publications of the SPCO, specifically a technical appendix containing detailed tables and charts and a mapping supplement

¹ For more information on the Community Social Data Strategy contact the Canadian Council on Social Development or visit <http://www.csds-sacass.ca/>.

exploring the geography of poverty in Ottawa. These are available at www.spcottawa.on.ca/publications_eng then look under “2010”.

This report does not address the impact of the recent recession on poverty levels. We recognize that the recession has increased economic insecurity in Canada. However, the main causes of poverty are systemic issues related to a changing labour market, a housing market which does not meet the needs of low income residents and social policies which are not adequately responding to profound changes in society. These issues have only been worsened by the recent recession.

We gratefully acknowledge the City of Ottawa, which has generously provided funds to the Social Planning Council to produce this report and for custom data purchases. We also offer sincere thanks to United Way Ottawa for its support of this report, resourcing part of the staffing and part of the translation. Additional resources for translation were raised through fundraising of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa.

We offer sincere thanks to member of our Advisory Committee

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The analysis of this report reflects the opinion of the SPC.

We hope that the findings of this report will assist policy makers, service providers and community members to advocate, develop and support poverty eradication measures. The evidence presented in this report indicates that poverty affects the entire society, whether one lives in poverty or not. Poverty has a direct impact on the current and future economic growth of the City.

1. A Snapshot of Poverty in Ottawa

Poverty increases slightly 2000 – 2005 despite higher incomes across Ottawa

Despite the relative economic growth experienced by the country during the period 2001-2006, there is a persistence of poverty in Canada (FCM 2010, p.4). Ottawa is no exception to this trend, even with a median individual income in Ottawa which was 20% higher than the median individual income in Ontario in 2005.

Facts:

- In 2005, 121,209 people in Ottawa lived on low income before taxes, representing 15.2% of the population (98,084 people or 12.3% below LICO after tax).
- This was a slight increase in the poverty rate from 2000, when 15.0% of the population was living on low income before taxes (116,884 people).

What do we mean by poverty or “living in low income”

This report uses the “Low Income Cut-Off” (LICO) to analyze poverty and low income in Ottawa. The LICO is calculated by Statistics Canada and is widely recognized as the most commonly used indicator of low income. Those below the LICO are likely to spend 55% of their income (20% more than the average) on food, shelter and clothing.

Different LICO thresholds are provided for communities of different sizes, reflecting changes in the costs of living. As well, in each community the LICO is scaled for family or household sizes. The table below provides the incomes below which different-sized families in Ottawa can be considered to be living with low income.

The 2006 census data is the first census for which Statistics Canada has provided information on the LICO “before tax” and “after tax”, showing the redistributive impact of tax measures. In most cases, the “LICO After Tax” figures show a slight improvement over the “LICO Before Tax” figures. However, comparisons between census years should only be made using the “LICO Before Tax” figures. Therefore, throughout the text, the analysis is based on LICO Before Tax figures, in order to understand the trends in Ottawa. The detailed data tables in the appendix provide both “LICO Before Tax” (LICO-BT) and “LICO After Tax” (LICO-AT) figures where they are available to us.

2005 Low-Income Cut-offs For Ottawa (500,000 population and over)							
Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2005 Low Income Cut Offs Before Tax	20,778	25,867	31,801	38,610	43,791	49,389	54,987
2005 Low Income Cut Offs After Tax	17,219	20,956	26,095	32,556	37,071	41,113	45,155

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue No.75F002MIE

Many live significantly below LICO

It is concerning enough that between 2000 and 2005 the rate of poverty has not improved in Ottawa and more individuals live in low income. To make matters worse, the cost of living in Ottawa is increasing at a faster rate than the incomes of low income residents. As a result, the “depth” of poverty has also worsened since 2000 (i.e. how far below the LICO people live). Many individuals and families are living in extreme poverty, significantly below LICO.

- Low income individuals in all household types were living \$7,800 below the LICO on average, in the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA (Ont.) in 2005. This was an increase from 2000, when this “low income gap” was \$6,900 on average.²
- 45% of low income unattached individuals (people not living in a family) lived on incomes at least 50% below LICO in Ottawa in 2005.³
- 31% of low income families lived on incomes at least 50% below LICO in Ottawa in 2005.⁴

Different Poverty Measures Don't Change the Issues

There are several different measures used in Canada to describe poverty:

*The **Low Income Measure (LIM)** identifies households of various sizes with an after-tax income lower than 50% of the median income for all households, irrespective of the city size.*

*The **Market Basket Measure (MBM)** estimates the cost of food, clothing and footwear, shelter, transportation and other goods and services related to the cost of living. Those whose disposable income is below the cost of purchasing these goods and services in their community (based on communities of similar size) are considered to be low income.*

*The **Deprivation Index** is a new index being developed, which the Province of Ontario proposes to use in relation to its' Poverty Reduction Strategy.*

Sometimes discussions about poverty get side-tracked by debating which is the “correct” measure. In fact, there is no one measure which suits all purposes – each has its strengths and weaknesses. A strength of the LICO is that most low income data from Statistics Canada uses this measure.

Whichever is used, the reality is that all individuals and families on social assistance in Ottawa and a significant proportion of the working poor live below all the poverty measures. The main issue remains how to ensure people have enough to support themselves and their families.

² From Statistics Canada, Table 202-0805, figures in 2006 constant dollars.

³ Community Social Data Strategy Urban Poverty Project 06 Table 10UI-A, 2006 Census.

Increased median incomes but slow improvement for those with low incomes

The median individual income in Ottawa rose 9.8% between 2000 and 2005, to \$33,024. However, not all groups benefited equally from the trend of increasing incomes. More people moved into the higher income brackets out of the middle income brackets, but there was very little change at the bottom end of the income scale. Between 2000 and 2005 there was a 5% increase in the proportion of residents with an income of \$60,000 or more with only a 2% decrease in the proportion with an income under \$20,000. There was virtually no change with respect to the percentage of Ottawa's population in each income quintile between 2000 and 2005.

- 23.7% of individuals aged 15 years and older had incomes over \$60,000 in 2005. The increase came from people previously in the middle income ranges.
- One third of people aged 15 years and over (219,325 individuals) had incomes under \$20,000. More than half of them possessed an income under \$10,000.
- 4.6% of the population aged 15 years and over had no income in 2005.

The income level of Ottawa's population shows two groups are at high risk, depending on their living situation: individuals without income and persons with an income below \$20,000. Included in the latter group are highly disadvantaged residents with an income under \$10,000. It is encouraging that the proportion of the population with income under \$20,000 decreased slightly during from 1995-2005. However, the proportion of people without income increased slightly, from 4% to 4.6%. People without income include:

- Stay-at-home parents who do not have their own source of income;
- Young adults without their own income, living at home and economically supported by their parents;
- Individuals using their savings to cover expenses while seeking employment or other sources of income;
- Immigrants who do not qualify for social assistance programs, particularly those under the family sponsorship program.

It is important to address situations where residents are falling through the cracks of social programs – including some young people facing multiple barriers to enter the labour market and some sponsored immigrants whose sponsor encounters financial hardship.

⁴ Community Social Data Strategy Urban Poverty Project 06 Tables 8EF & 10EF-A, 2006 Census.

2. Why is There Poverty in Ottawa?

Four factors are leading to poverty in Ottawa and elsewhere in Canada:

- e) Significant changes in the labour market, with the result that having a job is not a guarantee of rising out of poverty;
- f) A housing market which cannot meet the needs of low income households;
- g) Policies, social programs and income support programs that have not adequately mitigated market forces and reduced poverty.
- h) Additional factors which affect equity seeking groups, such as inadequate accommodations in the labour market for people with disabilities.

a. A changing labour market

Access to adequate employment is critical to reduce poverty. In 2005, there were 428,410 individuals 15 years and over in the Ottawa labour force. 94.1% were employed and 5.9% unemployed. The poverty rate before tax of those who were employed was 10.1%. In the case of unemployed persons, it was three times higher.

Although having a good job continues to be the best route out of poverty, having a job does not, in itself, ensure protection from poverty. Ottawa's labour market has changed dramatically over the past twenty years. An extensive literature has documented the impact of the globalization of the economy and labour including (SPCO 2008):

- A significant growth of the service sector, the dramatic decline of the North American manufacturing sector, and the emphasis on the "knowledge economy";
- An increase in non-standard or precarious employment (all employment that is not permanent, full-time and full-year), including the 24 hour service economy;
- Increase use of technology, including using it to replace some unskilled workers.
- The continuing polarization of incomes and access to benefits;
- Ongoing disparities between the labour market opportunities for women and men.

The growth in part time jobs is a significant concern

At the centre of the problem is the large percentage of part time, part year and temporary jobs in the labour market. In 2005, 77.5% of 472,045 persons 15 years and over in labour force, worked full-time and 22.5% worked part-time. Part time and temporary work has significant impact on employment income. As one would expect, those who worked 1 to 13 weeks had the lowest reported median and average incomes. Some people choose to work part time, but others work part time involuntarily because they cannot find full time work. Census data shows that female workers are overrepresented in part-time work across all population groups. The growth of part time work is a growing problem as the service sector grows in Ottawa, where many of the existing and new jobs are part time.

For the working poor, full-time/full-year employment falls short of providing adequate working income⁵.

5% of workers with a full-time / full-year job in 2005 still lived in poverty before taxes in Ottawa in 2005 (13,510). These are the working poor.

The following table provides the number of persons in the labour force living in poverty before taxes by work activity and their poverty rates.

Work Activity	In the Labour Force		Living in Poverty		
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Poverty Rate
Worked	472,045	100.0%	50,045	100.0%	10.6%
Full-Time	365,695	77.5%	29,190	58.3%	8.0%
Worked 1 to 48 weeks full-time/part-year	93,100	19.7%	15,680	31.3%	16.8%
Worked 49 to 52 weeks full-time/full-year	272,595	57.7%	13,510	27.0%	5.0%
Part-Time	106,350	22.5%	20,855	41.7%	19.6%
Worked 1 to 48 weeks part-time/part year	69,485	14.7%	15,265	30.5%	22.0%
Worked 49 to 52 weeks part-time/full-year	36,865	7.8%	5,590	11.2%	15.2%

Source: CSDS UPP06 Table 3, 2006 Census

75% of working poor individuals in Ottawa were aged 25 – 54, indicating that the phenomenon of working poverty is not primarily a problem for young adults as is sometimes claimed. It is primarily a result of low wages in jobs held by workers in their prime working years.

- 9% of families with children were working poor families in 2005 in Ottawa

Although they are a small portion of the working poor, young workers aged under 25 are three times more likely be working poor than workers in other age categories. This highlights the difficult transitions from school to work that youth face (SPCO 2008) as well as the challenges experienced by new entrants to the labour market.

People with children have a higher participation rate than people without children

In 2006, individuals with children had the highest participation rate in the labour force ⁶ (80.0%). This fact highlights the importance of strengthening support to working parents particularly access to affordable, licensed childcare. In 2008, there were in Ottawa, 7,208 subsidized spaces for licensed childcare and 2,100 children on the waiting list (Community Foundation of Ottawa 2009, p.10).

⁵ For more information view SPCO publications: (2005), *The Working Poor of Ottawa*, www.spcottawa.on.ca

⁶ The participation rate describes the percentage of the population 15 years and over which was working or seeking work

Self-employment is a risky alternative for people unable to get good jobs

Self-employment for some is a choice. For others, it is a survival strategy to overcome unemployment or underemployment. In 2006, Ottawa had 50,545 self-employed persons. They were 11.8% of the total employed population in the city, which was just slightly lower than the proportion of self-employed across Ontario, at 12.5%. Nearly one third of Ottawa self-employed were immigrants, including recent immigrants, indicating a higher percentage of immigrants were self-employed than in the general population.

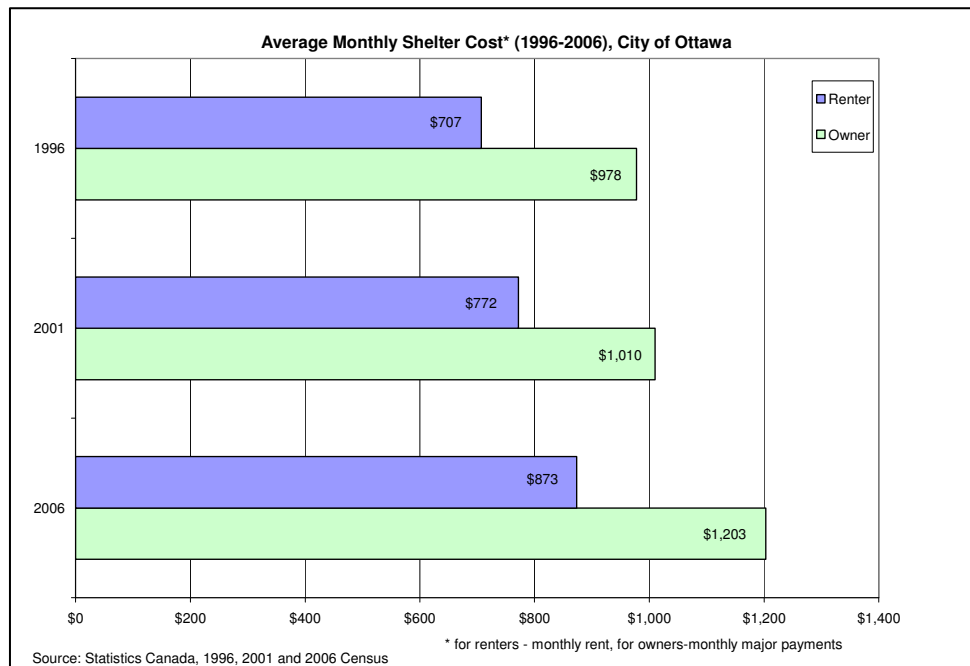
However, many people who are self-employed have low incomes.

- 40% of self-employed workers in Ottawa in 2005 had incomes below \$20,000 (19,570).

A survey by the Social Planning Council (SPCO 2010a) identified the need to provide more complete training for all skill levels to entrepreneurs. It is important to enhance the availability of financing and start-up loans and to increase awareness of existing programs and supports. While there are a number of agencies in Ottawa that provide some amount of training and support to entrepreneurs, the amount of support available is not nearly sufficient for the number of entrepreneurs in the city and the significant level of economic risk for people starting their own business (especially for ethnic groups, visible minority residents and Aboriginal residents).

b. Housing affordability

In addition to the concerning trends in the labour market, the second major factor leading to poverty in Ottawa is the profound shortage of quality and affordable housing. The housing market is not responding to the needs of the population in terms of household size, quality and affordability.



In the past 20 years, rents have increased beyond the cost of living and the construction of new social housing has stagnated (CMHC 2009). The chart above shows the increase in average monthly shelter cost for residents in Ottawa 1995 – 2005.

The proportion of total income spent by each household on shelter costs (rent or a major monthly payment) is generally accepted as a measure of housing affordability. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the standard for affordable shelter cost is 30% of gross household income.

- 42% of renter households in Ottawa spent 30% or more of their income on rent in 2006
- 15% of household owners spent over 30% on their mortgage payments.

By 2008, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment was \$995. The average rent dramatically exceeds housing allowances provided by social assistance programs. Furthermore, the deficit of social housing exacerbates the problem. In 2008, there were 9,692 households in Ottawa waiting lists for social housing. About 78% of all applicant households had incomes below \$20,000. However, more than half of new ‘affordable housing’ funded by the Ontario government necessitates a higher income. (Community Foundation of Ottawa 2009, p.7 and Ontario Auditor-General’s 2009 Annual Report).

In many cases, lack of affordable housing has left families living in poverty with no other choice than to live in inadequate dwellings.

- In 2005, there were 12,585 families and 9,785 individuals living in houses requiring major repairs. 20.8% of these families and 44% of the individuals lived in poverty. For lone parent families with children under 18, 51% of those living in housing needing major repair were living in poverty.

c. Social programs are not effectively responding to today's reality

There are two main sources of income: employment income and government transfers. In 2005, employment income (especially wages and salaries) was the main source of total individual income in Ottawa⁷. The percentage of government transfers included a high proportion of senior benefits, which reflected the aging population trend. The distribution of government transfers is presented below.

Table : Sources of Income Population Ottawa-Gatineau (Ontario Part), 2005	
Sources of Income	Percentages
Labour Income*	92.7%
Employment income	77.9%
Wages and salaries	72.0%
Self-employment income	5.9%
Government Transfer Payments	7.3%
Old Age Security pensions and guarantee income supplement	1.9%
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits	2.6%
Child benefits	0.7%
Employment Insurance benefits	0.8%
Other income from government sources	1.4%
* The table does not include investment income, retirement pensions and other income	
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census	

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2010), states that the federal and provincial retreat from traditional social transfers in the 1990 has frayed Canada's social 'safety net'. Reduced benefits, restricted eligibility criteria and a web of contradictory policies have trapped vulnerable individuals with no alternatives but poverty. As a result, the system itself is contributing to a process of exclusion, stigmatization and perpetuated poverty. While income support programs for seniors have been improved over time to respond to higher costs of living (including through indexing), other income support programs have fallen behind, often leaving those who rely on them with low incomes below the low income cut-off. Of urgent concern are the following three policy issues which affect many low income residents in Ottawa:

- ODSP and OW benefits are at the level of 1990 and inflation has further reduced their value in real terms.
- The recent (2010) cut to the Ontario Special Diet Allowance has worsened the situation for people on ODSP and OW.
- In 2008, less than one third of persons out of work in Ontario qualified for employment benefits, compared to about 80% in 1990. (OAFB 2009, p.17)

In addition, as the cost of living has increased, so has the cost of raising a family. It is increasingly difficult for a family to survive on one income. As the next section shows, families with one income and families with children are significantly more likely to be poor than other families.

⁷ Data for Ottawa-Gatineau CMA (Ontario Part).

However, government policies to support families have not kept pace with the changes in the labour market, the housing market and with demographic trends such as the impact of the aging population on care-giving. In particular:

- the continuing shortage of affordable, quality, licensed and flexible (non-standard hours) childcare is a critical policy gap for families, women and children
- the increasing demand for payment of school fees in the public education system creates additional hardship for low and moderate income families (SPCO, 2007).

Finally, access to many social programs and supports (such as supports for people with disabilities and seniors aging at home) are often affected by their asset levels. Many people experience hardship and are unable to get the supports they need because these policies have not kept pace with today's realities. It is beyond the scope of this report to examine this issue, but there is some concern that asset limits disproportionately affect low income seniors and people with disabilities. There is a pressing need for all programs using an asset limit to examine their policies to ensure individuals with low incomes are not facing access barriers.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) (2010) recognizes that the human cost of allowing the 'social safety' net to weaken, is huge. The withered 'safety net' has already showed its inability to respond to the recent economic recession. Municipalities are facing an increasing demand for services that challenges their resources. "Municipal social infrastructure provides a second line of defence, catching the increasing number of people who slip through gaps in the traditional safety net. If this second line of defense should fail, the consequences for Canada's most vulnerable will be severe." (FCM, 2010, p.7).

An important part of the social safety net is public transportation. Individuals with low income are heavily dependent on public transportation to give them access to the workplace, school, services and recreation programs. In 2005, there were 17,945 public transit users in Ottawa living in poverty. Two groups of users comprised 98.3% of those living in poverty before taxes. These were youth aged 15-24 years and the working age population 25-64 years old. The cost of transportation is a significant challenge for low income individuals and has been raised as a key barrier and hardship in numerous consultation processes in Ottawa over the past decade, including the public consultations leading to the creation of Ottawa's Poverty Reduction Strategy. In March 2010, the cost of a regular monthly bus pass for a student was \$73.25 and for an adult \$91.50. "Ottawa has the second-most expensive price for a monthly pass—ahead of only the country's most substantial transit system, Toronto." (Public Transit in Ottawa Portal). While the cost of public transportation is a significant challenge for municipalities, it is critical to seek ways to make public transit more affordable for low income residents as an important strategy to improve their situation.

d. Additional barriers affect equity seeking groups

Some population groups have historically faced particular barriers which others do not encounter and which contribute to their economic exclusion (i.e. higher rates of poverty and unemployment along with lower median incomes). Section 4 of this report looks at the situation of five groups who experience these barriers and who are at higher risk of economic exclusion:

- Aboriginal residents
- Immigrants
- Recent immigrants
- Visible minority residents
- People with disabilities

Some of the factors which affect these groups at risk of economic exclusion include:

- Lack of appropriate accommodations in the labour market for people with disabilities
- Discrimination
- The history of colonization between Canada and Aboriginal residents, including the creation of the system of reserves, the legacy of the residential schools, and a history of different social and legal rights
- Policies and practices particular to immigrants, including delays in the naturalization process, some restrictions on who can work, inflexible sponsorship policies, poor recognition of foreign acquired credentials.

Some of these factors are discussed briefly in section 4.

Throughout the report we use the term “equity seeking groups” as a short-hand way to refer to the five groups listed above. In fact, Canadian law and policy, including the City’s own equity policies, use a particular definition of equity seeking groups which is slightly different.⁸

⁸ Depending on the legislation or policy, the definition of equity seeking group may also include women, Francophones, and gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and trans-gendered people. They may or may not include immigrants explicitly, except to the extent that they are within the other groups (e.g. visible minority).

3. Who is Poor?

Certain population groups have higher rates of poverty than the general population, because they are more affected by the four factors which lead to poverty. To understand why, we need to look at who is poor from three perspectives:

- The family or household arrangement
- The stage of life
- The circumstances of particular groups (also called equity seeking groups)

The tables below provide an overview of the rate of poverty for different groups.⁹

Type of Family or Household	2005 Rate of Poverty
All economic families	11.1%
Families or households likely to have only one income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unattached people (i.e. not in a family, living alone or with others) • Lone parent families with children under 18 • Female lone parent families with children of any age 	34.1% 40.2% 31.7%
Families with a larger number of children (3 or more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couple families with 5 or more people (i.e. 3 or more children) • Couple families with 6 or more people (i.e. 4 or more children) • Lone parent families with 4 or more people (3 or more children) 	12.8% 22.3% 47.9%

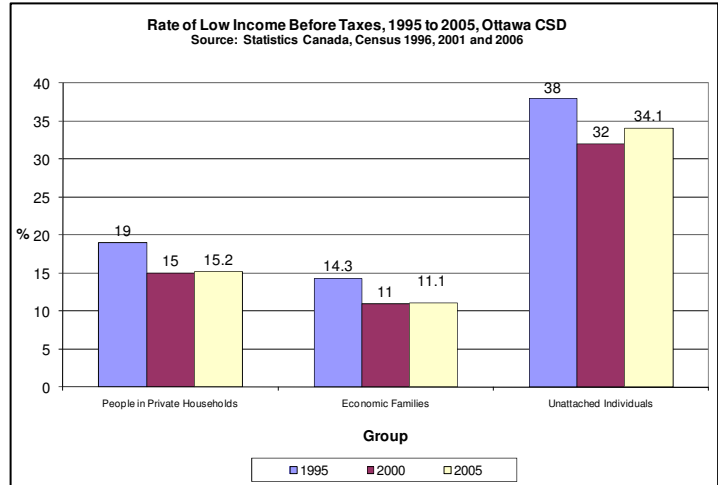
Individuals by Group	2005 Rate of Poverty
All individuals (in families or not in families)	15.2%
Individuals not in families (called “unattached individuals”)	34.1%
Children and Youth aged 0 – 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 • Children and youth under 18 • Youth 15 - 24 	21.2% 19.8% 18.7% 23.7%
Seniors aged 65 and over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors living alone • Seniors of Aboriginal identity • Recent immigrant seniors • Seniors with knowledge only of French 	11.9% 28.0% 26.3% 29.5% 28.3%
Women	15.9%
Aboriginal identity residents	25.3%
Immigrants	22.7%
Recent Immigrants	43.4%
Visible Minority Residents	30.5%
People with disabilities	21.0%
Francophones	16.0%

⁹ For more detailed tables, please see the Statistics Supplement to the Poverty Report, which is available from the Social Planning Council at www.spcottawa.on.ca/publications_eng then look under “2010”.

The Impact of Household or Family Arrangement on Poverty

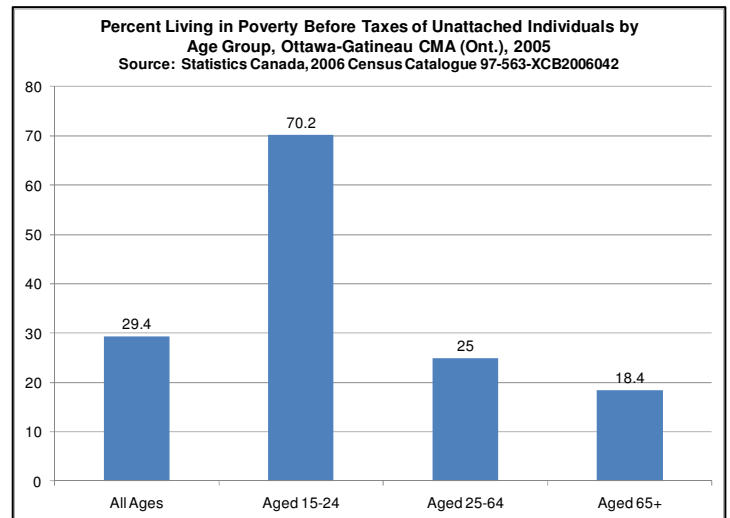
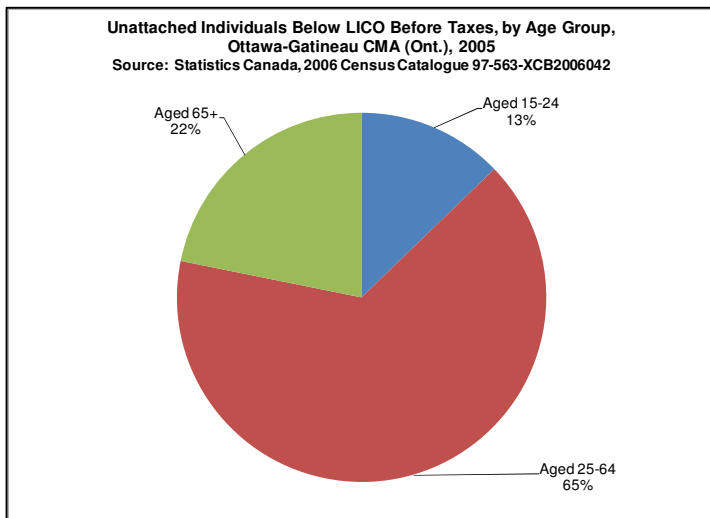
Unattached individuals have a very high rate and depth of poverty

- 34.1% of unattached individuals¹⁰, i.e. people not in families, live on low income in Ottawa (41,455 individuals). This is dramatically higher compared to 15.2% for all individuals and 11.1% for families.
- 45% of unattached individuals (18,645) were severely impoverished, with incomes below 50% of LICO before taxes in 2005.
- Unattached individuals fell even further behind in the period 2000 to 2005, during which their rate of poverty increased from 32% to 34.1%



Unattached individuals living in poverty come from all ages, but most (65%) are in their working years (see pie chart). However, unattached youth (aged 15 – 24) are much more at risk of living in poverty than unattached individuals in other age groups (see bar chart).

- 70% of youth aged 15 – 24 who are not living in a family are living in poverty, pointing to the significant challenges of transitioning to independence in Ottawa.



¹⁰ An unattached individual (person not in family) is a person living either alone or with others to whom he or she is unrelated, such as roommates or a lodger.

Unattached individuals living in low income are from all equity seeking groups. However, people with disabilities are significantly over-represented among unattached individuals in general, and particularly among low income unattached individuals.

- 36.5% of low income unattached individuals are people with disabilities.

Unattached individuals from all equity seeking groups are even more likely to be living on low income compared to all unattached individuals, ranging from 40% for Aboriginal identity residents who are not in a family to 69% for recent immigrants who are not in a family.

Unattached individuals are a very significant portion of Ottawa's poor, making up just over one third of all low income people in Ottawa. People not in families are one income households which makes them highly at risk to poverty in light of the increasing cost of living in Ottawa. Most of them live alone (58%), but many live with others to whom they are not related (42%). As well, they are vulnerable to unexpected income changes.

The poverty of unattached individuals is an extremely concerning trend. They did not benefit as much from overall income gains brought on by higher employment incomes. Individuals not in families started with the lowest income levels of all household types in 2000, and had the lowest rate of increase of all household types from 2000 – 2005, leaving them at the bottom of the income ladder. In addition, they have been left behind by public policy which has focused on children and families in recent years. As the percent of small households and unattached individuals grows in Ottawa, this is a very important issue which requires action with respect to access to good jobs, affordable housing for singles, improved supports for employment and affordable housing for people with disabilities and increased income supports for individuals who cannot work.

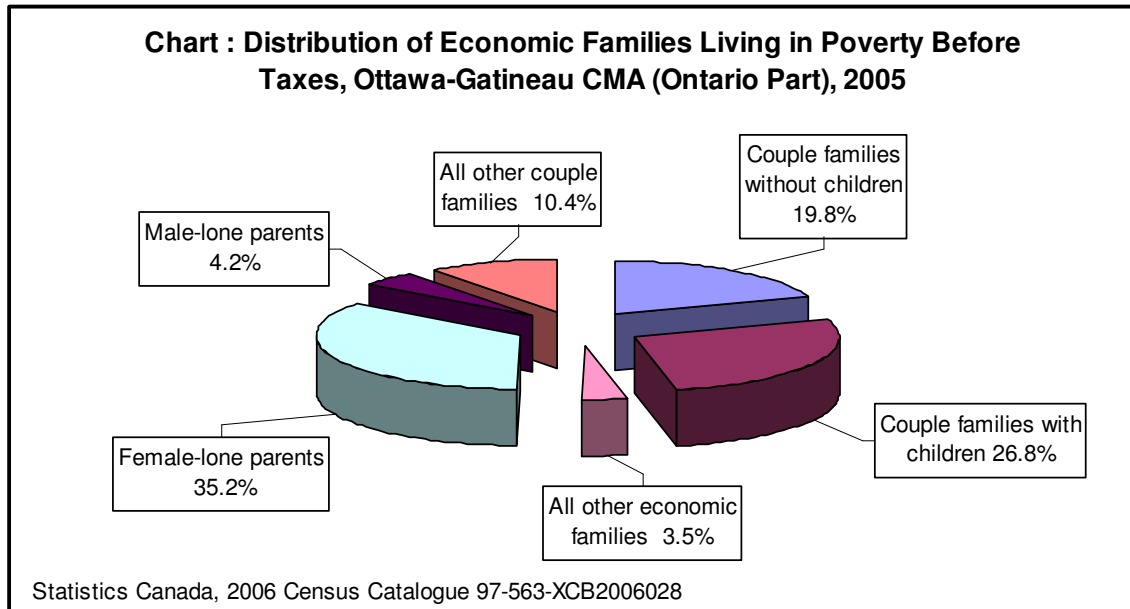
Families likely to have one income are at higher risk

In 2005, 11.1% of economic families lived in poverty in Ottawa before taxes (24,450 families). Those with one income were more at risk of poverty.

- 40% of lone parent families with children under 18 lived in poverty before taxes in 2005. Lone parent families are more likely to be single earner families.
- One third of economic families living in poverty were severely impoverished, with incomes 50% below LICO.

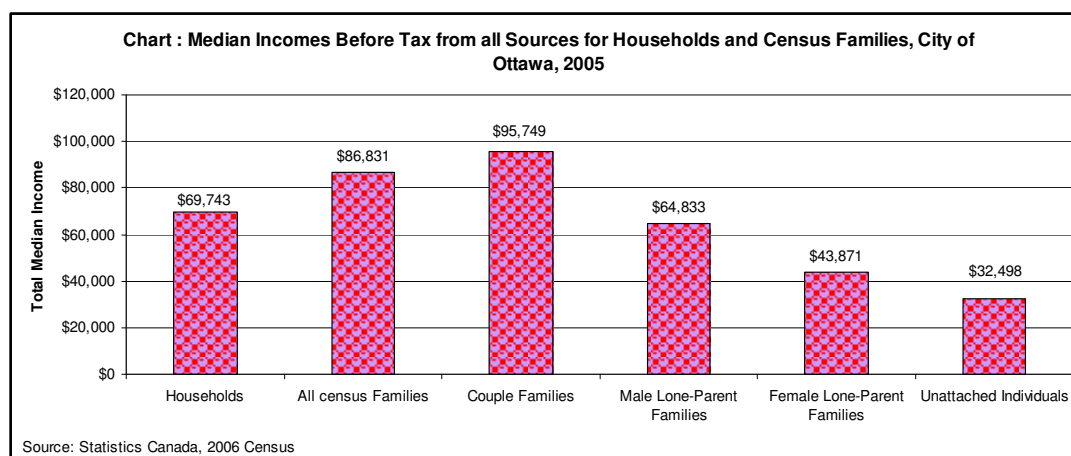
Only 7.6% of couple families lived in low income before taxes in Ottawa in 2005. However, since couple families are the most numerous type of family in Ottawa they represented a significant portion of low income families. In absolute number there were almost twice as many couple families as lone parent families among Ottawa's poor families in 2005. The chart below illustrates the distribution of families living in poverty.

- 35% of all low income families in Ottawa are female led lone parent families. This is disproportionate to their share of families.



Single mothers face specific challenges, which place them at a higher risk of lower incomes than single fathers. A main contributing factor is the lack of effective policies to support working parents (e.g. childcare). Other factors include, persistent gender inequalities and economic hardships after divorce/separation. Moreover, inadequate support to improve single-mothers' education and work skills, increases their risk to have precarious jobs. In 2005, female lone-parents' median income was 32% below that of their male counterparts.

Although the incomes of lone parents increased at a faster rate than other families in the period 2000 to 2005, lone parent families continued to be at the bottom of the income ladder. The median income of female lone parent families in 2005 was 46% of the income of couple families, and was closer to the income of unattached individuals than of male lone parent families.



The presence of children results in higher risk of family poverty

The size of the family, particularly the number of children present, is a factor in the risk of poverty. Families with more members are more vulnerable to income insecurity, as they have more dependents per family income.

- Of families living in poverty in Ottawa in 2006, more than six in ten had children.
- With just 3 or more children in a family, the incidence of low income rises to 12.8% for couple families or 48% for lone parent families, compared to 11.1% for all families. The rate increases with each additional child.

In 2005, out of 220,945 families in Ottawa, one in ten had 5 members or more. Of these, 40% lived in poverty before taxes. The poverty rate increases with the size of the family. Larger families are at a higher risk of poverty. In fact, the median income for families with 5 or more persons actually decreased for each additional person (above 5 people) except in the case of male led lone parent families of five or more people.

Furthermore, families in which the children are younger have a higher rate of poverty on average than families with older children. This is due to the greater barriers for parents of young children to work and address care-giving responsibilities on the one hand, and on the other, the possibility that older children may be contributing to the family income through part or full time employment. In 2005, there were in Ottawa¹¹ 1,980 couple families with children under 6 years living in poverty (9.9%) and 1,415 single mothers with children under 6 living in poverty (62.6%). The analysis shows the need to better support families with young children, especially those who are single mothers with younger children.

The significant rates of family poverty – particularly for those with one income and those with children – point to a pressing need for improved policies and programs to concretely assist families. It is difficult for them (particularly single mothers) to access the labour market. The increasing number of precarious or low paid jobs, the inadequate supports for working parents (especially single mothers), the increasing cost of housing and the deterioration of income security programs has played a role in the significant rates of poverty among many families. This is only exacerbated by the rising cost of living and increasing pressures such as the growing demand for parents to pay rising school related fees (SPCO, 2007).

¹¹ Data for Ottawa-Gatineau CMA (Ontario Part)

Poverty Across the Stages of Life

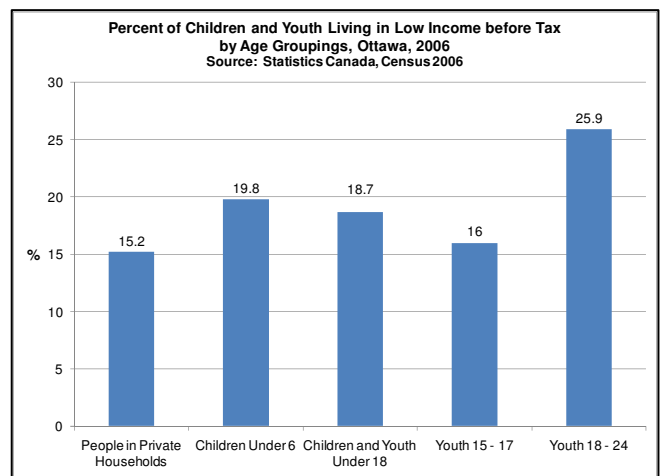
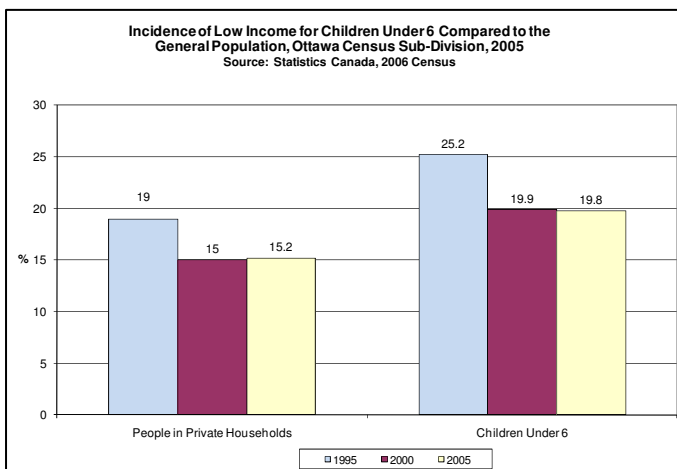
Child and youth poverty remains persistently high

Children and youth continued to have higher rates of poverty than the general population.

- 31% of all people living in poverty in Ottawa¹² in 2005 were children in families.
- 32,853 children and youth aged 18 or less lived on low income in Ottawa in 2005 (18.7%), which was almost one in five.

The persistence of high levels of poverty among children and youth is very concerning, given the extensive literature documenting the detrimental long term effects of poverty. Despite a stated government focus on reducing child poverty, there was virtually no change in the rate of child poverty in Ottawa 2000 to 2005. Furthermore, although all levels of government have highlighted the profound importance of the early years (ages 0 – 6), the rate of poverty was even higher for young children in Ottawa compared to all children under 18.

- 20% of children aged 0 – 6 lived on low income in Ottawa in 2005
- This rose to 65% of children aged 0 – 6 in female led single parent families.



55% of children living in poverty lived in couple families, since this was the most common type of family in Ottawa. 41% lived in female led single parent families. The risk of living in poverty was much greater for children in lone parent families, especially female led lone parent families, as these are more likely to be single earner families.

- 36.0% of children in female lone parent families lived in poverty in 2005 compared to 17.2% of children in male lone parent families and 10.4% of children in couple families.

¹² Data for Ottawa-Gatineau (Ontario Part)

Youth face difficult transitions to adulthood and independence

Youth 18 to 24 have a very high rate of poverty, reflecting difficulties for new entrants to the labour market, the high cost of housing, the fact that many are unattached individuals, and the economic burdens experienced by young families.

- 26% of youth aged 18 to 24 lived on low income before tax in 2005 in Ottawa.

Youth face greater economic exclusion than the general population, including lower median incomes, higher unemployment and over-representation in part-time / part-year work. Many young people move from job to job, either by choice or because the work is non-standard. Competition is very fierce, even for starter positions. As well, many move between the labour market and education. (SPCO, 2008b).

- 16% of young adults aged 15 – 24 who worked full time / full year in 2005 were working poor¹³. They made up 15% of all the working poor in Ottawa.

Research has demonstrated that youth who live in poverty are at higher risk of not completing their education. Some youth leave school early and enter the labour market, in order to contribute to the family income. Their likelihood of holding precarious jobs is high. The lack of completion of their studies compromises present and future job opportunities for youth. (SPCO, 2008b)

- 25% of 15 to 19 year old early school leavers and 41.3% of 20 to 24 year old early school leavers lived on low income before tax in 2005 (SPCO, 2008b).

With respect to family and household formation, the trend is for this to be delayed, significantly due to housing and labour market conditions and the longer periods of time that young people are in education on average (SPCO, 2008b). Other factors include immigrant family values regarding extended family, and inadequate supports for young adults with some disabilities. Children move out of the family home but move back again and youth stay longer in the parental home on average. (SPCO, 2008b). Furthermore, when young people do establish families or households, they experience higher levels of poverty, particularly if they have children.

- In 2005, there were 27,260 adult children aged 25 or older living in the parental home in Ottawa. 7.4% of those lived in poverty before tax.
- 70.2% of 15 – 24 year olds not living with their family lived in poverty in 2005 (i.e. living alone or with others not related to them)
- 92% of lone parent families led by a woman aged 15 – 24 lived in poverty in 2005

Overall, public policy has not effectively responded to the impact of housing and labour market conditions on young people. Furthermore, youth who were already living in poverty in the parental family face the same realities in making their transitions, but their options are more limited than is the case for many other young people. In particular, research has identified how the design of social assistance and subsidized housing

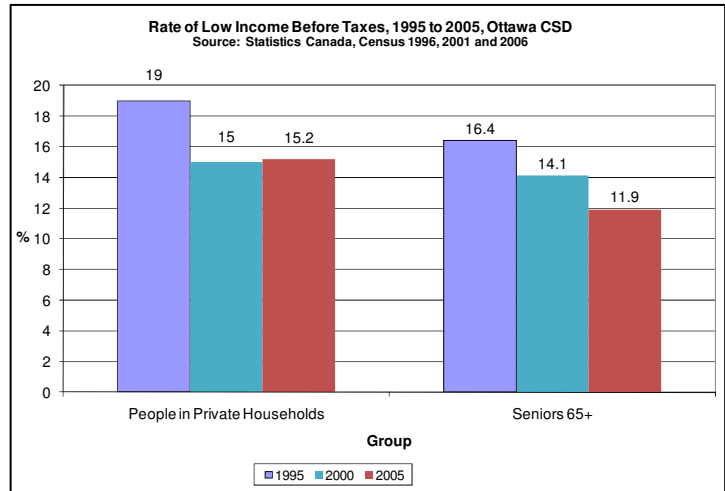
¹³ We define working poor as someone working full year / full time and still living below the LICO. This does not include people working part time or part year who are poor.

policies creates barriers for young people engaged with these systems as they attempt to transition to the labour market (Stapleton, 2006).

Seniors poverty improves but seniors living alone remain at high risk of poverty

Seniors aged 65 and over had a lower rate of poverty compared to the general population (11.9% compared to 15.2% before tax) and over the past decade the incidence of low income among seniors has improved.

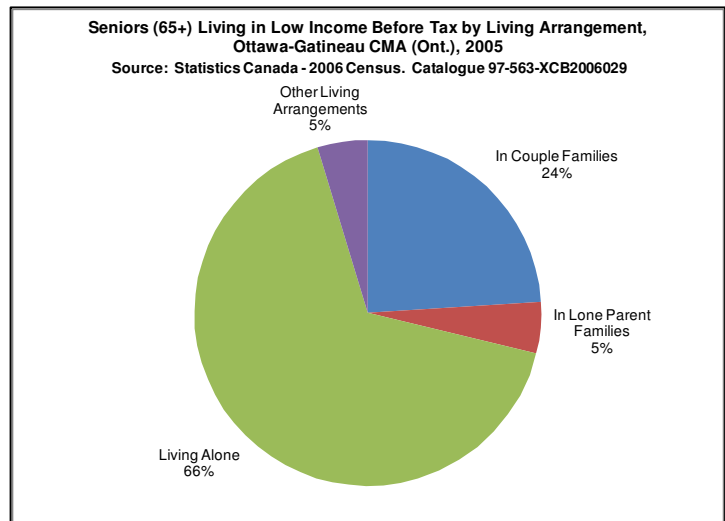
However, almost 11,000 seniors lived on low incomes in Ottawa in 2005 (11.9%)



Seniors' income has improved since the implementation of the guaranteed seniors income programs in Canada. However, seniors with low income remain. In 2005, 30,270 seniors 65 years and over living in Ottawa had incomes below \$20,000. Indeed, 18.3% had incomes under \$10,000. Furthermore, in 2005 there were 1,190 seniors without income. Many of them are likely immigrant seniors unable to access pensions, because of eligibility criteria. The chart below presents the distribution of seniors by income level.

The vast majority of seniors living in poverty were unattached seniors living alone, particularly female seniors. Government transfers and re-distribution through the tax system were not enough to keep them out of poverty, particularly with the high cost of housing.

- 67% of all seniors living in poverty were living alone.
- The poverty rate for seniors living alone was 28% compared to 11% for all seniors.



Seniors with only a knowledge of French and seniors with no knowledge of English or French also had significantly higher rates of poverty, at 28% each. Seniors belonging to these language groups face difficulties to access language and culturally sensitive-services in Ottawa. Many Allophone seniors are also likely to be sponsored immigrants with restricted access to some services by the family-sponsorship agreement.

Women continue to have higher rates of poverty related to care-giving

Overall the rate of poverty for women was comparable to that of men.

- In 2005, 15.9% of women lived in poverty before taxes (65,195) compared to 15.2% for the general population and 14.5% for men (56,210).

Women continued to have significantly lower median incomes compared to men. However, there was an improvement as women's median income increased from 57% to 68% of men's median income in the period 1995 to 2005. (SPCO, 2008a). This came from more women entering the labour market.

However, for women in the caregiving years, we see a greater degree of economic exclusion compared to men. Women's lower median incomes are significantly related to their care-giving responsibilities, which affect their ability to access the labour market. Women have lower employment income due to their overrepresentation in part-time and part-year jobs. As well, women (especially those with children) have higher unemployment rates than men.

- In 2005, there were in Ottawa, 20,860 part-time workers living in poverty before taxes; 57.0% of them were women. The majority of these women (71.1%) worked part of the year.
- In 2006, the unemployment rate of women in Ottawa was 6.1% compared to 5.7% for men.
- The unemployment rate for women with children under 6 was 10.1% and for women with children under 6 and over six was 8.5%.

Poverty rates are severe for female led lone parent families (31.3% before tax). The rates are higher for those families with younger children.

- 62.6% of female lone parent families with children under 6 lived in poverty.

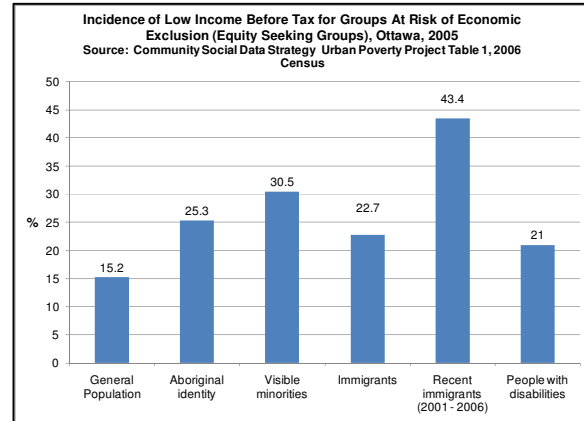
In addition, senior women have higher rates of poverty than senior men. The reality of women balancing care-giving with work over the lifespan translates to lower retirement incomes for senior women compared to men. With women overrepresented in precarious jobs, such as part-time and part-year jobs, and experiencing more periods when they are not working outside the home, this in turn has limited their contribution to pension plans, which could have strengthened their economic security after retirement. In addition, more senior women live alone than senior men, which increases their risk of poverty.

- 14.7% of women over 65 lived on low income in 2005 (7,525 individuals) compared to 8.4% of men over 65 (3,340 individuals).
- 29% of women over 65 living alone live in poverty compared to 23% of men over 65 living alone.

Despite improvements for women overall, poverty levels of women in population groups vulnerable to economic exclusion were higher than for women in general.

4. Population Groups at High Risk of Economic Exclusion (Equity Seeking Groups)

The income analysis shows factors of systemic social and economic inequality based on gender, race, length of time in Canada and ability. Poverty rates were dramatically higher for individuals in the Aboriginal population, racialized groups (visible minorities), immigrants (especially recent immigrants)¹⁴ and persons with disabilities. As well, they fared more poorly with virtually every indicator discussed in the report.



Findings indicate that the income disparities and higher rates of poverty cannot be explained by their educational attainment only. In fact, despite having higher than average education levels, some equity seeking groups (especially immigrants) are often not able to secure adequate employment due to the structure of the labour market and discrimination.

Social, economic and policy barriers that exclude these groups most also be considered. For example, people with disabilities face additional barriers in relation to accessing the labour market compared to the general population. Moreover, there is a wealth of research documenting that racialized groups experience additional barriers in the labour market. Thus, policies and programs to support individuals in these groups are crucial to lift them out of poverty. Bill 52, the Ontario Poverty Reduction Act, states there is a need to address discrimination and barriers faced by disadvantaged groups. In addition, the Ottawa Poverty Reduction Strategy recognizes the need for strategies targeted for groups which face economic exclusion.

A full examination of economic exclusion of population groups is beyond the scope of this paper. However, for each equity seeking group, we provide a brief overview of some of the factors that contribute to their economic exclusion. In addition, we provide a reference table which compares key poverty and income indicators for the equity seeking group compared to the general population. The reference tables make clear the disproportionate level of economic exclusion of equity seeking groups. For more detailed tables with respect to each indicator (e.g. poverty rates for children by equity seeking group), please consult other publications of the Social Planning Council which are based on the 2006 census (visit www.spcottawa.on.ca). Please note that women are considered an equity seeking group in some legislation, but they are not included in this section, as their economic situation has been discussed earlier in this report. Further, the economic circumstances of Francophones are addressed in a separate section, as we were not able to access data for Francophones with the same variables as the other groups.

¹⁴ Those who arrived from 2001 to 2006.

Aboriginal identity residents

- 25.3 % of Aboriginal identity residents lived in poverty before tax in 2005 compared to 15.2% for the general population.

In 2005 the Aboriginal population median employment income in Ottawa was \$30,025 compared to \$34,373 for the general population. The median income of Aboriginal identity residents in Ottawa was higher than that for Aboriginal identity residents in Ontario.

A key factor in the economic outcomes for the Aboriginal identity population in Ottawa is the fact that it is a demographically young community with a high number and percentage of children. In 2006, 39.0% of the Aboriginal population were children and youth aged 0-24 compared to only 31.5% in the general population. This results in a higher dependency ratio, with more dependent children per members of the working population. In addition, there is a slightly higher female to male ratio in the Aboriginal identity population in Ottawa, which has implications given the higher incidence of poverty among women in general. (SPCO, 2008a)

The education level of the Aboriginal community is another factor, given the importance of education and the need for increasing levels of education in the labour market. Eighteen percent of the Aboriginal population from the age group 15-24 had a university education in 2006 and 45% from the age bracket 25-34. However, there is also a significant portion of the younger population, 15-24 years, which does not have a certificate, diploma or degree. This includes early school leavers and students who have not yet graduated. In 2006, 44% of the Aboriginal population aged 15-24 were in this situation, as well as 9% of the age group 25-34. On the positive side, this age group had 24% of people with a college education and 45% with some university education or a completed university certificate or degree. (SPCO, 2008a)

The economic exclusion of Aboriginal identity residents in Ottawa is also affected by Canada's history of assimilation, in which there was a strong stigma attached to being Aboriginal, a lack of acceptance into "white society" and a profound loss of culture due to government policies. The legacy of the residential school system has decimated families, family structures, and a culture of extended family and community. Every aspect of family and community life is marred by the loss of language, culture, and generations of parenting experience. The distinct nature of Aboriginal child and family poverty is rooted in cultural fragmentation, multi-generational effects of residential schools, wardship through the child welfare system, and socio-economic marginalization.

In addition, while most Aboriginal people live off reserve (including all those in Ottawa) there are few provincial programs targeted for urban children, youth and families. In this way they face additional disadvantage in relation to some of the services and amenities provided for other low income children, youth and families.

Poverty Indicators for the Aboriginal Identity Population Compared to the General Population, Ottawa 2006 (2005 for income data).

Source: Diverse Tables from the Community Social Data Strategy, Urban Poverty Profiles, 2006 Census

	Aboriginal Identity Population	Individuals in the General Population
All Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax (unattached individuals or in families)	25.3%	15.2%
Families Living in Poverty Before Tax	10.7% 49.7%	7.6% Couple Families 40.2% Lone Parent Families
Unattached Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax	39.6%	34.1%
Children 0 – 24 Living in Poverty Before Tax	33.5%	21.2%
Seniors Aged 65+ Living in Poverty Before Tax	26.3%	11.9%
Depth of Poverty: Families Living 50% or more below the Low Income Cut Off Before Tax	31.5% 23.5%	28.9% Couple Families 34.5% Lone Parent Families
Depth of Poverty: Unattached Individuals Living 50% or more below LICO Before Tax	48.9%	45%
Lone Parent Economic Families with Incomes Under \$20,000	26.4%	23.1%
Unattached Individuals with Incomes Under \$20,000	40.1%	32.9%
Total Median Income	\$26,317	\$32,991
Employment Median Income	\$30,025	\$34,373
Labour Market Participation Rate	72%	69.3%
Unemployment Rate	9%	5.9%
Working Poor (Worked Full Time / Full Year with Income Below LICO Before Tax)	6.9%	5.0%
Unattached Individuals Below the Poverty Line (Before Tax) Living in Dwellings Requiring Major Repairs	43.1%	44%
Unaffordable Housing for Tenants: Percent Who Were Low Income From All Economic Family Households Who Were Tenants and Spending 30% or More of Income on Rent	79.3%	68.6%

Immigrants and recent immigrants

- 22.7% of immigrants lived in poverty before tax in 2005 compared to 15.2% for the general population.
- 43.4% of recent immigrants (arrived 2001 to 2006) lived in poverty before tax compared to 15.2% for the general population.

As the summary indicator tables in the following pages show, recent immigrants have dramatically poorer economic outcomes compared to all others.

- The median employment income for recent immigrants was \$14,838 compared to \$28,797 for all immigrants and \$34,373 for the general population.

There are several factors which lead to the economic exclusion of immigrants, which are only exacerbated for recent immigrants. The primary issue is labour market barriers. There is an extensive literature documenting that immigrants not only face higher unemployment rates, but also significant under-employment and job segregation, and less representation in management. The challenge of inadequate recognition of foreign acquired credentials is well known. In addition, the data reveals that a disproportionate percent of immigrants working full time had only part year work (84.7%). Employment instability of full-time workers increases their risk.

There are three categories of economic barriers affecting immigrants and recent immigrants, all of which require action.

1. Labour market barriers specific to first generation immigrants, including such issues as lack of recognition of foreign acquired credentials and experience, language barriers (including levels of bilingualism and soft communication barriers), and delays in naturalization for some, especially refugees.
2. Labour market barriers affecting visible, ethnic and religious minorities, whether immigrants or not, including access to social capital, the cultural context of hiring and promotion, racism, Islamophobia, and Anti-Arab sentiment, especially since 9/11, and a shortage of affordable childcare which is culturally appropriate.
3. The nature of Ottawa's economy and labour market, including the importance of government as an employer in Ottawa, with a persistent and documented lack of progress on equitable access to government jobs, the importance of English / French bilingualism, the polarization of the economy, with a significant and persistent body of marginal jobs, the high failure rate of business which disproportionately affects immigrants who are more likely to start a business.

In addition, the demographic structure of immigrant communities is another significant factor. In particular, recent immigrant and visible minority communities have a higher proportion of children and youth. As well, there is a slightly higher incidence of lone parent families, particularly among communities who came as refugees.

Poverty Indicators for Immigrants Compared to the General Population, Ottawa 2006 (2005 for income data).		
Source: Diverse Tables from the Community Social Data Strategy, Urban Poverty Profiles, 2006 Census		
	Immigrants	Individuals in the General Population
All Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax (unattached individuals or in families)	22.7%	15.2%
Families Living in Poverty Before Tax	13%	7.6% Couple Families
	53.5%	40.2% Lone Parent Families
Unattached Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax	40.6%	34.1%
Children 0 – 24 Living in Poverty Before Tax	40.5%	21.2%
Seniors Aged 65+ Living in Poverty Before Tax	15.1%	11.9%
Depth of Poverty: Families Living 50% or more below the Low Income Cut Off Before Tax	27.3%	28.9% Couple Families
	34%	34.5% Lone Parent Families
Depth of Poverty: Unattached Individuals Living 50% or more below LICO Before Tax	43%	45%
Lone Parent Economic Families with Incomes Under \$20,000	28%	23.1%
Unattached Individuals with Incomes Under \$20,000	38%	32.9%
Total Median Income	\$26,016	\$32,991
Employment Median Income	\$28,797	\$34,373
Labour Market Participation Rate	64%	69.3%
Unemployment Rate	7%	5.9%
Working Poor (Worked Full Time / Full Year with Income Below LICO Before Tax)	8.4%	5.0%
Unattached Individuals Below the Poverty Line (Before Tax) Living in Dwellings Requiring Major Repairs	47.1%	44%
Unaffordable Housing for Tenants: Percent Who Were Low Income From All Economic Family Households Who Were Tenants and Spending 30% or More of Income on Rent	79.1%	68.6%

Poverty Indicators for Recent Immigrants (Arrived 2001 – 2006) Compared to the General Population, Ottawa 2006 (2005 for income data).

Source: Diverse Tables from the Community Social Data Strategy, Urban Poverty Profiles, 2006 Census

	Recent Immigrants (Arrived 2001 – 2006)	Individuals in the General Population
All Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax (unattached individuals or in families)	43.4%	15.2%
Families Living in Poverty Before Tax	28.8% 66.5%	7.6% Couple Families 40.2% Lone Parent Families
Unattached Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax	68.6%	34.1%
Children 0 – 24 Living in Poverty Before Tax	51.5%	21.2%
Seniors Aged 65+ Living in Poverty Before Tax	29.5%	11.9%
Depth of Poverty: Families Living 50% or more below the Low Income Cut Off Before Tax	37.4% 47.1%	28.9% Couple Families 34.5% Lone Parent Families
Depth of Poverty: Unattached Individuals Living 50% or more below LICO Before Tax	63.2%	45%
Lone Parent Economic Families with Incomes Under \$20,000	41.3%	23.1%
Unattached Individuals with Incomes Under \$20,000	57.1%	32.9%
Total Median Income	\$13,513	\$32,991
Employment Median Income	\$14,838	\$34,373
Labour Market Participation Rate	68%	69.3%
Unemployment Rate	13%	5.9%
Working Poor (Worked Full Time / Full Year with Income Below LICO Before Tax)	19.6%	5.0%
Unattached Individuals Below the Poverty Line (Before Tax) Living in Dwellings Requiring Major Repairs	75%	44%
Unaffordable Housing for Tenants: Percent Who Were Low Income From All Economic Family Households Who Were Tenants and Spending 30% or More of Income on Rent	85.7%	68.6%

Racialized communities (visible minority residents)

- 30.5 % of visible minority residents lived in poverty before tax in 2005 (49,265 individuals) compared to 15.2% for the general population.
- The median employment income for visible minority residents was 23,365 compared to \$34,373 for the general population

The incidence of poverty in the visible minority population varies among groups. From the table below we see that the Black and Arab visible minority groups are over 50% of all visible minority residents in poverty (33.2% and 20.8% respectively). In addition, these groups, along with the West Asian group (e.g. Iraqis) face rates of poverty which are dramatically higher than other visible minority groups and the general population.

Visible Minority Groups	Total Population		Living in Poverty		
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Poverty Rate
Visible Minority Groups	161,380	100.0%	49,265	100.0%	30.5%
Chinese	30,700	19.0%	5,765	11.7%	18.8%
South Asian	26,460	16.4%	5,650	11.5%	21.4%
Black	38,935	24.1%	16,370	33.2%	42.0%
Filipino	7,105	4.4%	1,280	2.6%	18.0%
Latin American	8,055	5.0%	2,150	4.4%	26.7%
Southeast Asian	10,375	6.4%	2,590	5.3%	25.0%
Arab	24,085	14.9%	10,240	20.8%	42.5%
West Asian	6,050	3.7%	2,800	5.7%	46.3%
Korean	2,105	1.3%	795	1.6%	37.8%
Japanese	1,680	1.0%	175	0.4%	10.4%
Visible Minority, n.i.e.	1,615	1.0%	525	1.1%	32.5%
Multiple visible minority	4,210	2.6%	940	1.9%	22.3%
* Includes Immigrants and Canadian-born					
Source: Data Request EQ1550 Table 8, 2006 Census					

A clear theme which emerges is the racialization of economic exclusion in Ottawa, particularly poverty, resulting in polarization of economic benefits along colour lines. Visible minority residents are 40% of Ottawa's poor citizens. Blacks, Arabs and West Asians in Ottawa are almost three times more likely to be poor than the general population. The exacerbation of economic exclusion along race lines is an extremely divisive dynamic, and one which will not be resolved without an anti-racist approach.

However, the profound economic exclusion is not only a function of discrimination. In Ottawa (unlike many other communities) many of the visible minority communities are relatively new and significantly made up of immigrants (in 2006 64% of visible minorities were immigrants). Therefore, the racialization of poverty in Ottawa is strongly affected by the same factors as for immigrants and recent immigrants. For example, the Black community has a significantly higher number of families with children, recent immigrants, and refugees. The West Asian group is primarily recent immigrants, etc.

For more information on these groups, please consult the Social Planning Council's 2009 report "*Immigrants' Economic Integration: Success and Challenges*".

Poverty Indicators for the Visible Minority Residents Compared to the General Population, Ottawa 2006 (2005 for income data).		
Source: Diverse Tables from the Community Social Data Strategy, Urban Poverty Profiles, 2006 Census		
	Visible Minority Residents	Individuals in the General Population
All Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax (unattached individuals or in families)	30.5%	15.2%
Families Living in Poverty Before Tax	19.4%	7.6% Couple Families
	59.0%	40.2% Lone Parent Families
Unattached Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax	52.4%	34.1%
Children 0 – 24 Living in Poverty Before Tax	38.8%	21.2%
Seniors Aged 65+ Living in Poverty Before Tax	21.8%	11.9%
Depth of Poverty: Families Living 50% or more below the Low Income Cut Off Before Tax	30.0%	28.9% Couple Families
	37.9%	34.5% Lone Parent Families
Depth of Poverty: Unattached Individuals Living 50% or more below LICO Before Tax	57.0%	45%
Lone Parent Economic Families with Incomes Under \$20,000	32.6%	23.1%
Unattached Individuals with Incomes Under \$20,000	48.3%	32.9%
Total Median Income	\$19,830	\$32,991
Employment Median Income	\$23,365	\$34,373
Labour Market Participation Rate	68%	69.3%
Unemployment Rate	9%	5.9%
Working Poor (Worked Full Time / Full Year with Income Below LICO Before Tax)	10.4%	5.0%
Unattached Individuals Below the Poverty Line (Before Tax) Living in Dwellings Requiring Major Repairs	57.6%	44%
Unaffordable Housing for Tenants: Percent Who Were Low Income From All Economic Family Households Who Were Tenants and Spending 30% or More of Income on Rent	82.4%	68.6%

People with disabilities

- 21% of people with disabilities lived on low income before taxes in Ottawa in 2005 compared to 15.2% in the general population.
- The median employment income for people with disabilities was \$28,359 compared to \$34,373 for the general population.

A significant factor in the income levels of people with disabilities is the source of income. A lower percent get their income from working, and therefore, a higher percent get their income from government transfers.

A major problem for people with disabilities is the extremely low rates paid under some programs, particularly the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Ontario Works (OW) and in some cases Workers Safety and Insurance Board payments. In particular, all people with disabilities on OW and ODSP live in poverty. To make matters worse, several of the income support programs (O.D.S.P., Ontario Works, CPP, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board) deduct a significant portion of earnings from the incomes support payment if individuals are able to obtain some work. This makes it very difficult for them to move out of poverty.

Only 43% of people with disabilities over 15 years old participate in the labour force in Ottawa, compared to 69% of the general population. Several factors affect labour market participation of people with disabilities including lack of appropriate accommodations in many jobs, discrimination including stereotyping about their abilities, and for some people, interruptions in work history related to the disability, and a shortage of appropriate forms of supported employment for diverse disabilities. Along with immigrants, people with disabilities who have post secondary education face challenges getting work appropriate to their education. Finally, the nature of the individual's disability significantly affects labour market participation. According to Statistics Canada's analysis of the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, persons with more than one disability report lower participation rates than those with only one, either due to the nature of the activity limitation or because of barriers or lack of accommodation¹⁵.

In addition, people with disabilities face a higher unemployment rate and a lower median employment income. The lower median employment income is significantly related to a lower percentage of people working full time (49% vs. 55%). Depending on an individual's disability or state of health, this may be a choice. However, research indicates that people with disabilities are among those who are more likely to be working part time involuntarily.¹⁶

Finally, people with disabilities are very significantly over-represented among unattached individuals and people living alone, which is a risk factor for poverty.

¹⁵ SPC, (2006), page 18.

¹⁶ CPS, (2005), page 11.

Poverty Indicators for People with Disabilities Compared to the General Population, Ottawa 2006 (2005 for income data).		
Source: Diverse Tables from the Community Social Data Strategy, Urban Poverty Profiles, 2006 Census		
	People with Disabilities	Individuals in the General Population
All Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax (unattached individuals or in families)	21%	15.2%
Families Living in Poverty Before Tax	8.6%	7.6% Couple Families
	52.1%	40.2% Lone Parent Families
Unattached Individuals Living in Poverty Before Tax	42.6%	34.1%
Children 0 – 24 Living in Poverty Before Tax	30.5%	21.2%
Seniors Aged 65+ Living in Poverty Before Tax	13.9%	11.9%
Depth of Poverty: Families Living 50% or more below the Low Income Cut Off Before Tax	23.2%	28.9% Couple Families
	30.9%	34.5% Lone Parent Families
Depth of Poverty: Unattached Individuals Living 50% or more below LICO Before Tax	37.5%	45%
Lone Parent Economic Families with Incomes Under \$20,000	28.9%	23.1%
Unattached Individuals with Incomes Under \$20,000	42.1%	32.9%
Total Median Income	\$26,399	\$32,991
Employment Median Income	\$28,359	\$34,373
Labour Market Participation Rate	43%	69.3%
Unemployment Rate	7%	5.9%
Working Poor (Worked Full Time / Full Year with Income Below LICO Before Tax)	6.5%	5.0%
Unattached Individuals Below the Poverty Line (Before Tax) Living in Dwellings Requiring Major Repairs	54.4%	44%
Unaffordable Housing for Tenants: Percent Who Were Low Income From All Economic Family Households Who Were Tenants and Spending 30% or More of Income on Rent	69.7%	68.6%

Francophones

Francophones in Ottawa had overall income and poverty levels comparable to or better than the general population.

- 16% of Francophones lived in low income before tax in 2005 in Ottawa (24,030 individuals), which was just slightly higher than the general population (15.2%).
- 40% of Francophones living in poverty were children and youth aged 0 – 24, which was similar to that of the general population.
- The Francophone population had a higher median income compared to the general population in Ottawa (\$35,241 vs. \$33,024).

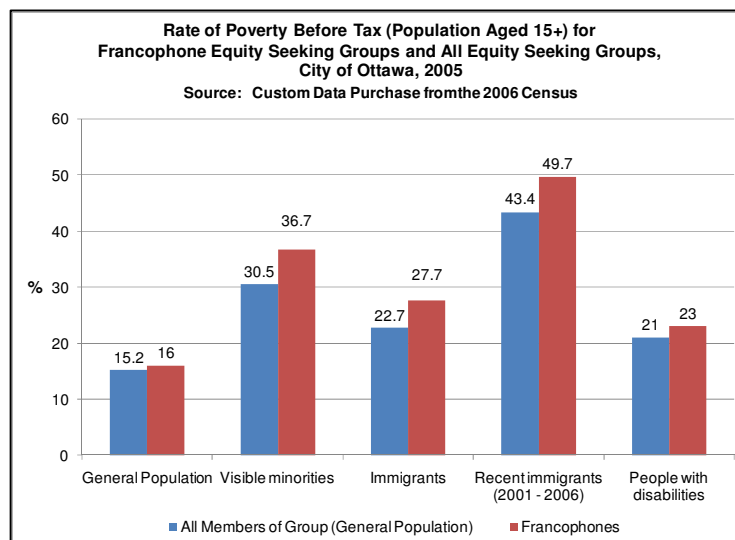
However, certain groups within Ottawa’s Francophone community are experiencing significant economic exclusion, which highlights very concerning trends.

First, Francophone seniors have a significantly higher rate of poverty than seniors in the general population, a rate comparable to the overall seniors poverty rate ten years ago.

- 16% of Francophone seniors live in poverty compared to 11.9% in the general population.

The higher rate of poverty for Francophone seniors is related to a history of lower incomes, especially lower employment incomes, compared to the general population. This translates into lower retirement incomes including lower pensions and savings. Francophone senior women are particularly disadvantaged given the significant percentage who were stay-at-home mothers. Of even greater concern are Francophone seniors who speak only French, who have even higher rates of poverty than all Francophone seniors, and who face additional barriers accessing appropriate services.

Another very concerning situation is the condition of Francophones in all the equity seeking groups. As the chart below highlights they face significantly higher economic exclusion compared to all people in those equity seeking groups.



A significant issue which explains much of this is the fact that Francophones in equity seeking groups experience multiple barriers (sometimes called “multiple factor exclusion”), with each adding further challenges. In particular:

- People who speak only French or French and an official language are disadvantaged in the labour market.
- 56% of Francophone immigrants in Ottawa arrived within the past 15 years compared to 46% for all immigrants. The economic situation of immigrants tends to improve over time, but Francophone immigrants have not had much time here.
- As well, many arrived as refugees which created additional challenges.
- 63% of Francophone immigrants are visible minorities, versus 58% of immigrants in general. They face the barriers of visible minority groups and of immigrants.
- Of all Francophone visible minority residents living in poverty in 2005, 67% were from the Black community and 16% were from the Arab community. These two groups experience a significantly higher incidence of economic exclusion compared to other visible minority groups in Ottawa (SPCO 2008b, 2008c).

In addition, these groups had relatively larger families, which increased their risk of poverty. 44.8% of Francophone visible minority households had 4-5 persons. 17.9% had 6 or more persons.

The analysis presented reinforces the findings of a Social Planning Council report which highlights the valuable assets of Francophone immigrants related to their command of French and their educational achievements. (SPCO, 2010b) They have proportionally completed more postsecondary studies than both, the Francophone population and Ottawa population as a whole. Despite their assets, Francophone immigrants, recent immigrants and visible minorities face various economic and social barriers to their integration, as this report has demonstrated. Their economic exclusion affects not only themselves, but the development of Francophone communities as a whole.

The Definition of Francophone

The Social Planning Council uses a custom definition of “Francophone” which was negotiated with representatives of the Francophone community and then used to purchase custom data from Statistics Canada. The definition includes:

- *A person whose first language or languages are French or French plus a non-official language, and who can conduct a conversation in French.*
- *A person whose first language is not English or French, but whose first official language is French.*
- *A person who speaks primarily French or French plus a non-official language at home.*
- *An equal distribution of individuals who have both official languages as first languages spoken.*

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The recommendations in this report are focused at the local level.

All levels of government have a crucial role to play in poverty reduction. Strong public policy and programs from the Federal government have resulted in significantly lower rates of poverty for seniors. This level of commitment is equally needed to address child, family and individual poverty. Programs such as the Child Tax Benefit and the Working Income Tax Benefit are improvements, but the overall policy and program gaps at the Federal level with respect to income supports and the social safety net (such as restrictions in access to Employment Insurance and inadequate action on affordable housing) are resulting in falling fortunes for those in poverty who are not seniors.

As well, several important policy areas are the Province's responsibility, including minimum wages, social housing regulations, and several income support programs. Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy is a very positive move forward, providing a framework for focused efforts to reduce the impact of child and family poverty in Ontario – which is also an important issue in Ottawa. However, to effectively address the trends identified in this report, Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy would need to be modified in two key ways

- It would need to incorporate strategies to address the issue of poverty among unattached individuals, who are a very significant portion of Ontario's poor, and who will not benefit from Province's Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- Most importantly, the Plan would need to include increases to the benefit levels for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support payments, which are critically below the amounts needed to cover basic costs of living in Ottawa.

Furthermore, the Provincial government has recently cut the "Special Diet Allowance" for people with documented health conditions with particular dietary requirements. This is resulting in extreme hardship and requires urgent action.

Clearly initiatives at the municipal level are not a substitute for action by higher levels of government to provide comprehensive social programs, education, early childhood supports, health services and adequate income support programs. However, there is increasing recognition of the importance of strong municipal policy and programs to reduce poverty and mitigate the impact of poverty of individuals and families.

Ottawa's Poverty Reduction Plan is an excellent example of a locally based plan to take concrete action toward poverty reduction. It was developed with significant input from people living in poverty, and provides a framework for meaningful policy and program initiatives in the short and long term. This profile of poverty in Ottawa is complimentary to Ottawa's Poverty Reduction Strategy, providing additional statistical information and analysis which can help with the implementation of the strategic directions in the Plan and the planning for subsequent phases. We offer a small number of recommendations which build on the recommendations and actions in Ottawa's Poverty Reduction Strategy, and which relate to the key factors which are leading to poverty in Ottawa.

1. Ensure the City's commitment to a multi-year, multi-phase Poverty Reduction Strategy which continues with the ten key project areas identified in Phase 1 and expands the strategy to address additional areas identified in Phase 1.
2. Re-invest the savings from the upload of social assistance benefits into affordable housing. This profile confirms that the lack of affordable housing is one of the primary factors leading to the persistence of poverty in Ottawa. Focusing the reinvestment of the savings in this area would result in significantly more impact with respect to reducing poverty than dispersing it across different initiatives.
3. The City develop, under the leadership of the Economic Development Branch, a community economic development strategy designed to increase the number of good jobs for people facing barriers in the labour market and poverty. This would include stimulating niche economic sectors which have significant potential to provide adequate incomes and which are locally oriented (i.e. the nature of the work does not permit the labour to be outsourced outside of Ottawa). The strategy should be developed with other City departments and in collaboration with community stakeholders with knowledge of community economic development. In addition, community economic development should be incorporated in the City's updated Economic Plan as an important part of the City's economic strategy.
4. The City, in collaboration with Just Food, establish a taskforce which will identify and put in place additional programs / initiatives to increase access in the short term to nutritious food for low income residents in the City. Despite an existing network of food banks and community food initiatives (such as community gardens), many individuals and families do not have enough income for basic nutritious food. This is an urgent issue, made more pressing by recent cuts to the provincial "Special Diet Allowance".
5. As part of Phase 2 of the Ottawa Poverty Reduction Strategy, investigate the options for implementing a reduced fare bus pass for low income individuals
6. All school boards in Ottawa review their existing guidelines, policies and procedures with respect to all fees charged to students in the regular day school program (such as course fees, purchase of materials, etc.). As well all school boards ensure appropriate practices with respect to school fees are implemented down to the individual classroom and that accountability processes are in place.
7. Increase the availability of supports for immigrant children in the school system particularly Multicultural Liaison Workers and supports for English as a Second Language and French as a Second Language.

Although the report is focused on recommendations for the local government and local school boards, we make three recommendations to senior levels of government which are critical.

- 1. That the Province immediately introduce a \$100 monthly food supplement to the basic needs allowance for all adults receiving social assistance to address the existence of widespread food insecurity and chronic illness related to inadequate nutrition.*
- 2. That the Province annually increase social assistance rates to reflect the cost of living, including average housing costs and the cost of the Nutritious Food Basket.*
- 3. That the Federal government pass Bill C-304 as a means to developing a national housing strategy and that funding for the Affordable Housing Initiative, the federal renovation programs (RRAP) and the Homelessness Partnering Strategy be renewed beyond 2011.*

Glossary of Terms

Allophone:

A person whose mother tongue is other than English or French. Being an Allophone does not mean one cannot speak either English and/or French.

Average Income:

The total or “aggregate” income divided by the number of units in the population.

Census Families:

A married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either of both partners), or a lone-parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. A couple living common-law may be of opposite or same sex.

Children Living at Home:

Includes children 0-14 years, youth 15-24 years and adult children 25 years or more living in the parental home.

Depth or Intensity of Poverty:

Indicates the percentage to which the income of an individual or family is below LICO low-income cut-offs.

Economic Families:

Refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption. A couple may be opposite or same sex.

Early School Leavers:

Youth aged 15-24 years who did not complete high school and are not attending school.

Francophone Population:

The Social Planning Council uses a custom data definition of Francophones that includes:

- A person whose first language or languages are French or French plus a nonofficial language, and who can conduct a conversation in French.
- A person whose first language is not English or French but whose first official language is French.
- A person who speaks primarily French or French plus a non-official language at home.
- An equal distribution of individuals who have both official languages as first languages spoken.

Full-Year/Full-Time Work:

Refers to persons who worked 49-52 weeks (mostly full-time) in the reference year for pay or in self-employment.

Labour Force:

Persons who are either employed or unemployed but seeking employment.

Low Income Cut Offs (LICO):

Are income thresholds determined by analyzing family expenditure data. Families with incomes below these thresholds are likely to devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than would the average family. LICOs are defined for five categories of community size and seven of family size. The after-tax LICO offers a better measure of the actual disposable income for families on basic necessities than pre-tax indicators.

Low Income Measures (LIMs):

Identify various sized households with an after-tax income lower than 50 per cent of the median income for all families in a given year. These measures are categorized according to the number of adults and children in families, regardless of city size.

Market Basket Measures (MBMs):

Include estimates of the cost of food, clothing and footwear, shelter, transportation and other goods and services related to local costs of living. The MBM defines low-income Canadians as those persons living in families whose disposable income is below the cost of purchasing the basket of goods and services in their community or a similar sized one within a specific region.

Median Income:

The amount that divides the income distribution of a population group into two halves. That is, the incomes of the first half of the families or non-family persons are below the median income, while those of the second half are above the median income.

Multi-Family Households:

Households in which two or more nuclear families reside in the same dwelling. They include multi-generational families.

Non-Family Persons (Unattached Individuals):

Household members who do not belong to a census or economic family.

Ontario Deprivation Index:

Include a list of items or activities considered necessary to have an adequate standard of living, but those who are poor are unlikely to be able to afford. The items in a deprivation index are not a comprehensive list of basic needs since in a wealthy society such as Ontario most households, even the poor, are likely to have most of the basic necessities. The items in the index are intended to distinguish the poor from the non-poor.

Other Economic Families:

Those in which the economic family reference person does not have a spouse or common-law partner, nor a child in the family, only other relatives.

Participation Rate:

Identifies the percent of the population 15 years and over involved in the labour market (employed or unemployed) as distinguished for those in the population not in the labour market.

Poverty Line:

The Social Planning Council identifies LICO low-income cut-offs as the poverty line, below which individuals face challenges to meet their basic needs.

Poverty Rate:

The Social Planning Councils identifies as poverty rate, the percentage of individuals or families that live below LICO low-income cut-offs, below which individuals cannot meet their basic needs.

Recent Immigrants:

Population who arrived in Canada during the five years preceding the census. Recent immigrants for the 2006 Census are those who arrived during the 2001-2006 period.

Unattached Individual (also called Non-Family Persons):

A person living either alone or with others to whom he or she is unrelated, such as roommates or a lodger.

Visible Minority (Racialized Groups):

Statistics Canada defines visible minorities, as “non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour, other than Aboriginal.” They include: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean and Japanese.

The term “visible minority” is an exclusionary term, regrouping a wide range of Canadians with ancestral origins from all over the world except Europe and with widely varying contemporary social realities. The term “racialized community” is more inclusive terminology which more accurately reflects the reality that these are assigned identities.

Work Activity:

Refers to the number of weeks in which a person worked for pay or in self-employment in the reference year at all jobs held, even if only for a few hours, and whether these weeks were mostly full time (30 hours or more per week) or mostly part time (1-20 hour per week).

Working Poor:

The analysis of the working poor in this report focuses on those who worked full-year/full-time, whose income falls below the Low Income Cut-Off Before taxes.

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